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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the President of the Council on consultations with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the implementation of the Declaration

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–3	2
II.	Support to non-self-governing territories by the specialized agencies and international organizations associated with the United Nations	4–37	2
	A. United Nations Development Programme	6–13	2
	B. International Labour Office	14–30	4
	C. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	31–35	7
	D. World Food Programme	36	8
	E. Additional replies	37	8

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2006/37, the Economic and Social Council requested its President to continue to maintain close contact with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on the matters contained in that resolution and to report thereon to the Council.

2. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 61/231, the General Assembly requested that the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations examine and review conditions in each territory so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the territories. In the same resolution, the Assembly commended the Economic and Social Council for its debate and resolution on the question, and requested it to continue to consider, in consultation with the Special Committee, appropriate measures for the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

3. Information submitted by the specialized agencies and the international organizations associated with the United Nations on their activities in relation to non-self-governing territories is set out below.

II. Support to non-self-governing territories by the specialized agencies and international organizations associated with the United Nations

4. According to the information provided by the specialized agencies and the international organizations associated with the United Nations, a number of the specialized agencies and organizations have continued, during the period under review, to provide support to the peoples of non-self-governing territories in response to the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee. A number of organizations have extended or established such programmes of support using their own budgetary resources in addition to their respective contributions as executing agencies of projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the primary provider of support.

5. A number of assistance projects have continued to receive funding from the United Nations Development Programme and are carried out in close collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

A. United Nations Development Programme

6. In 2006, the UNDP country office in Jamaica supported the implementation of a disaster management project in the Cayman Islands and supported vocational and skills training in the Turks and Caicos Islands at a cost of $127,412.56.

7. In the Cayman Islands, activities were carried out under their recovery project that included data collection for mapping vulnerability to storm surge and flooding;

developing and utilizing hazard and loss analysis models for the Cayman Islands; and training in logistics support systems for relief supply management. In 2006, the Cayman Islands established a hazard management agency (Hazard Management Cayman). The management and implementation of project activities have since been transferred from the Cabinet Office to the head of the agency. With an agency dedicated towards hazard management issues, it was anticipated that project activities would be executed in a more efficient and timely manner.

8. From 2004 to early 2007, support to non-self-governing territories in disaster risk reduction and management thematic area of the UNDP office in Barbados and the Office of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has been provided under the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative. Capacity-building support has also been provided through the OECS Environmental and Sustainable Development Unit. Under the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative, a case study of the integration of disaster risk management into the development agenda was undertaken for the British Virgin Islands in 2005. In addition, the Turks and Caicos Islands had an institutional review of its disaster management mechanisms using the Caribbean Risk Management strategy as the framework. UNDP supported the development of a comprehensive disaster management strategy stewarded by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, which has been adopted by all member States of the Agency, including the non-self-governing territories administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the Caribbean.

9. UNDP has also agreed to support a disaster management project with the OECS Environmental and Sustainable Development Unit, involving building capacity in OECS member States in the area of macro-socio economic post-disaster assessment and a community vulnerability assessment developed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The British Virgin Islands has benefited from both initiatives and Anguilla has benefited from capacity-building in the ECLAC assessment methodology.

United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Volunteers

10. In the Turks and Caicos Islands, the provision of assistance by three United Nations Volunteers involved in projects largely geared towards public sector capacity-building. The Volunteers provided support to the development of small-scale enterprises for income and employment creation, including support to the creation of agriculture-based business support services, targeting tourism in particular. In addition, the Volunteers made policy recommendations to improve the micro business and agricultural sector.

11. During the 2006-2007 period, the United Nations Volunteer programme continued its support to Montserrat by providing technical support, under the project funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development, aimed at raising the capacity of the territorial Government to manage disaster and risk reduction (Millennium Development Goal 7, environmental sustainability-disaster management and risk reduction). Over the years, support has been provided in different areas ranging from information and communications technology, psychology, occupational therapy and housing. In the past year, technical assistance continued in the area of building Geographic Information System (GIS) capacity for the management of land resources and planning in the Ministry of Agriculture,

including the areas of housing and the environment. This involved the creation of land resources databases and the computerization of land cadastre and land registry systems through the use of GIS. Within this Ministry, technical support was also provided in the area of housing and physical planning, which was central to the provision of affordable housing on the island as a key component of a broader effort by the Government in the housing sector.

12. Through the United Nations Volunteer programme, technical assistance has also been provided to the Ministry of Education in the area of special education to children with learning difficulties occasioned by different disabilities. Similarly, further assistance has also been provided in the environmental sector where support has been geared towards the development and implementation of the national environment strategy.

13. In Anguilla, the United Nations Volunteer programme provided technical assistance in environmental capacity-building through the assistance of an international Volunteer. Such assistance has been geared towards the development and implementation of the national environment strategy. In addition, the provision of technical support to community groups in fostering their skills in environmental management enabled these communities to acquire enhanced project skills, positioning them for greater success with the relevant small grants programmes in the region designed to meet the environmental challenges faced by the local population. This support ended in early 2007.

B. International Labour Office

14. The involvement of the International Labour Office (ILO) in non-self-governing territories is both normative and operational in nature.

1. Normative dimension

15. In its normative dimension, the work of ILO focuses on the application and promotion of international labour standards, namely International Labour Conventions (binding once ratified) and International Labour Recommendations (non-binding). In that regard, those Conventions were declared applicable, under article 35 of the ILO Constitution, to 12 of the 16 remaining non-self-governing territories, including American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Falkland Islands (Malvinas),[1] Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Saint Helena, Tokelau and the United States Virgin Islands by France, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as appropriate, together with the pending comments by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in relation to the cited territories.

16. It should be noted that in the case of the Cayman Islands, Pitcairn, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Western Sahara, no declaration has been made under the above-mentioned article 35 of the ILO Constitution. With regard in particular to the situation of the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United

[1] A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (see ST/CS/SER.A/42).

Kingdom has informed ILO that consultations are ongoing with the local authorities with a view to filing a declaration under article 35.

2. Operative dimension

17. The Decent Work Agenda, involving the promotion of full and productive employment carried out in conditions of freedom, dignity and security, provides the basis for the work of ILO in its member States and in the relevant territories. The Ministerial Declaration[2] adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2006 includes a commitment to promote full and productive employment and decent work through ILO as well as other organizations. The range of ILO action, from rights at work to poverty reduction measures involving the world of work, may be consulted on the ILO website (www.ilo.org).

18. Concerning the operative dimension, the non-self-governing territories benefit from ILO technical advisory and information services and some of them participate frequently in ILO-sponsored subregional meetings and seminars.

19. In particular, with regard to the Caribbean area and Gibraltar, attention is called to the following information, provided by ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, which is located in Port of Spain and by the Madrid Office, for Gibraltar.

Territories in the Caribbean

20. The English-speaking non-metropolitan territories served by the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean are members or associate members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).[3] They are therefore involved in CARICOM activities and initiatives undertaken by ILO.

Participation in ILO meetings

21. Delegates from Bermuda and Turks and Caicos Islands who attended the 2006 International Labour Conference as members of the delegations of the United Kingdom participated in the informal meetings of delegates from the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean islands held on 2, 6 and 13 June 2006. At those meetings the delegates discussed the work of the Conference committees and the particular concerns and positions of the Caribbean in regard to issues on the agenda. Delegates from the territorial Governments of the non-self-governing territories attended the preparatory discussions for the Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum that were convened with senior ILO officials during the Conference. They also joined the Caribbean Government delegates who met as a group with the Director-General Mr. Juan Somavia on 6 June 2006.

22. National consultations were held in Bermuda, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands for the preparation of the Forum which took place in Barbados (10-12 October 2006). The background paper for the Forum made reference to social and labour developments and situations in Caribbean countries as well as in non-self-governing territories.[4] All the English-speaking non-self-governing

[2] www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/exrel/ecosoc/2006/ecosoc_2006_md.doc.

[3] Montserrat (CARICOM member) and Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands (CARICOM associate members).

[4] ILO, "Responding to globalization: a decent work agenda for the Caribbean in the context of regional integration" (2006).

territories administered by the United Kingdom were represented at the Forum.[5] The delegations participated in the group meetings and plenary sessions that culminated in the adoption of the Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing the Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean. They expressed interest in drawing up decent work programmes through which ILO could support their social and economic policy initiatives. Background material, the list of participants and the outcome document of the Forum can be found on the website (www.ilocarib.org.tt/oldwww/cef/index.html).

Policy-oriented research and studies

23. The ILO policy-oriented research and reports are being used to review the structure and functions of labour departments in certain Caribbean countries and non-self-governing territories. For example, recommendations of a 2005 organizational review carried out by the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean are currently being implemented in Turks and Caicos Islands. In March 2006, a similar review was carried out in Bermuda.

24. The ministry in the Cayman Islands responsible for labour matters prepared a national employment report with the technical support of the ILO Subregional Office in 2006.

25. ILO research and publications focusing on the subregion cover relevant developments in the non-self-governing territories. For example, dispute settlement in Bermuda is the subject of a chapter in a 2006 publication.[6]

Provision of advisory services

26. The ILO Subregional Office provided support to the Government of the Cayman Islands in its international search for suitable consultants to provide expertise in the fields of labour administration and technical and vocational education and training.

Awareness-raising, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building

27. Employers' representatives from Anguilla and Montserrat took part in a symposium organized by ILO and held in Saint Lucia on 6 and 7 February 2006 on the theme "The review of employment relations under the CARICOM single market and economy: employer positions from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and territories". They exchanged information with representatives of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States employers' organizations on matters relating to regional integration and discussed operating strategies for enterprises and employers in the new environments arising from the creation of a single market and economy. One subject discussed was the advocacy role that employers' organizations could play in addressing the social and labour aspects of regional integration. Employers from the aforementioned non-self-governing territories were

[5] Present were delegations from Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

[6] A. Brock, "Adjudication in industrial disputes: the case of Bermuda", in S. J. Goolsarran, ed., *Industrial Relations in the Caribbean: Issues and Perspectives* (Port of Spain, ILO Caribbean Office).

involved in the elaboration and adoption of an action plan to implement the conclusions of the symposium.

Gibraltar

28. On 2 January 2007, the new Constitution of Gibraltar entered into force, giving Gibraltar more control over its internal affairs. Four sectors form the basis of its economy: financial and banking services (including offshore activity and online gaming), port and ship-related services, tourism, commerce. According to sources in Gibraltar, an estimated 97 per cent of the economically active population was employed as of June 2006.

29. An agreement reached on 18 September 2006 provided for equal treatment of workers from Gibraltar and Spain in regard to old age pensions, thus resolving a dispute dating to 1989. In regard to other social security benefits, however, Spanish trade unions complain that the benefits and extent of coverage in Gibraltar are inadequate and that Spanish workers in Gibraltar are required to use Spanish health services although they make social insurance contributions to Gibraltar.

Other territories

30. Specific information concerning the non-self-governing territories in the Pacific was not received, although the ILO office in Suva covers these territories, with technical support provided from the ILO Subregional Office in Manila. The territories are covered by the Decent Work Agenda and are affected by the conclusions of the fourteenth ILO Asian Regional Meeting.

C. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

31. The work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the development challenges faced by small island developing States is relevant to most non-self-governing territories. The Organization's assistance to those States has focused principally on support for sustainable development policies and practices in agriculture, rural development, forestry, fisheries and food security. FAO support is facilitated by its field offices, including the Subregional Office for the Caribbean, located in Barbados, and the Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, located in Samoa.

32. On 18 November 2005, FAO convened in Rome a special ministerial event on food security and sustainable development in small island developing States, followed by a special meeting of Heads of State and Government on 23 November 2005. The declaration of this meeting reaffirmed the desire for food security and sustainable development in small island developing States to receive special attention and differential treatment. Furthermore, ministerial proposals were endorsed to strengthen the food security programmes of small island developing States through capacity-building, including activities in the numerous areas related to development of the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors. A programme for sustainable food security was adopted, to be implemented through the expansion of the FAO regional programmes for food security in the Caribbean and Pacific small island developing States.

33. FAO continues its support to small island developing States through the regional programmes for food security, mainly in the Caribbean and the Pacific states and through the strengthening of food production systems, food policy frameworks and agricultural trade expansion. In the Caribbean, national medium-term investment plans have been completed for all the countries with assistance from FAO, with a view to increasing and expanding current food security, agricultural and rural development activities.

34. Within this framework, in some instances, Territories are invited to participate at their own expense in FAO subregional workshops and other relevant FAO meetings, for example, in the area of fisheries. Some of the Territories also have forest resources. In the framework of the forest resources assessment, FAO has prepared and published reliable information on the forest resources of the relevant Territories. Under the International Network of Food Data Systems, FAO has food composition-related activities in New Caledonia.

35. In the area of early warning, the FAO Global Information and Early Warning System is contributing to the preparation of the Caribbean Regional Programme for Food Security.

D. World Food Programme

36. The World Food Programme (WFP) assists refugees from Western Sahara who are in neighbouring Algeria. WFP has been assisting the Saharawi refugee population since 1986 by distributing a full ration of food commodities, which covers the basic food requirements of the refugees. In view of the high rates of anaemia and chronic malnutrition among the Saharawi refugees, WFP provides supplementary food for children under five and for lactating and pregnant women. Primary schoolchildren receive a ration of high-energy biscuits, which they consume during the first hours at school. This improves their concentration during class, as, despite the general food distribution, most of them come to school hungry. WFP has delivered food valued at US$ 154 million to Algeria, mostly for the Saharawi refugees.

E. Additional replies

37. The following specialized agencies also replied, indicating that at the present time they are not carrying out any assistance programmes in the non-self-governing territories: Universal Postal Union, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Environment Programme, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Trade Organization.